

California Recovery Task Force

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Gov. Schwarzenegger Announces First Construction Groundbreaking of a Recovery Act Funded Infrastructure Project

State Pumping Recovery Act Funds into Economy Quickly & Effectively To Create Jobs

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today announced the first construction groundbreaking of an infrastructure project funded by the America Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) in California. The project will create more than an estimated 200 jobs in the construction industry and improve the pavement on a 50-year-old section of Interstate 80 located in the Bay Area's Fairfield between State Route 12 and Air Base Parkway, a roadway used by nearly 200,000 motorists each day. Funded fully by Recovery Act dollars and coming in nearly 40 percent under original cost estimates, this project was the first ARRA project bid to be opened, awarded and break ground on construction in California.

"When President Obama made infrastructure projects a priority, we immediately took action because we know firsthand this investment provides a shot to the arm for our economy and puts Californians back to work," said Governor Schwarzenegger. "The groundbreaking of this project illustrates how quickly and effectively we are pumping Recovery Act funding into our economy to create jobs for Californians and invest in the future of our state's infrastructure."

Expected to be completed by the end of 2009, the \$13.5 million project will resurface and repair the freeway thereby extending pavement life, saving taxpayers money, and improving road conditions for motorists and truckers moving goods. The winning bid from contractor Top Grade Construction of Livermore was the lowest bid submitted at nearly 40 percent below the California Department of Transportation's (Caltrans) cost estimate. Savings from this project have been directed to advance other highway projects.

"This is the first Recovery Act funded infrastructure project to break ground in California, with \$13.5 million in spending hitting the streets and our economy," said Will Kempton, Director of Caltrans and a member of the Governor's California Recovery Act Task Force. "The Department is working around the clock with the federal government to ensure that these Recovery Act dollars are pumped into our economy as quickly and effectively as possible to create jobs, jobs, jobs."

By the end of April, the Federal Highway Administration will have authorized the expenditure of nearly \$850 million in federal economic stimulus funds to California for transportation projects, putting the state on track to have \$900 million authorized by June 30 to meet the requirements of the Recovery Act. Funds that other states do not use by this deadline will become available for the other states for transportation projects, which California will pursue aggressively.

Estimates show California will receive nearly \$2.6 billion from the Recovery Act for highways and local streets and \$1 billion for transit projects. Discretionary programs could add another \$300 million and California expects to be very competitive in securing a portion of \$8 billion set aside nationally for high-speed rail and intercity rail.

Governor Schwarzenegger created the California Recovery Task Force to track the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding coming into the state; work with President Barack Obama's administration; help cities, counties, non-profits, and others access the available funding; ensure that the funding funneled through the state is spent efficiently and effectively; and maintain a Web site that is frequently and thoroughly updated for Californians to be able to track the stimulus dollars.

The Task Force can be reached through its Web site, www.recovery.ca.gov, or by telephone at (916) 322-4688.

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